

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07 INR-07 LAB-04

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R 030410Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7249

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 2914

DEPT PLEASE PASS MORRIS PALADINO, AAFLI-WASHINGTON FROM
WEAST

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, IN

SUBJECT: AAFLI

QUOTE

1. THIS IS A RESUME OF MY FEBRUARY 28 CONVERSATION WITH
MAHESH DESAI MENTIONED IN MY OTHER MARCH THREE CABLE.

2. MAHESH HAD JUST RETURNED TO BOMBAY FROM DELHI, WHERE
HE HAD BEEN MEETING WITH INTUC OFFICIALS, ATTEMPTING
TO ARRANGE CLOSER HMS/INTUC COOPERATION. HE SAID HIS
PROGRESS HAD BEEN MINIMAL, AND THAT HE CANNOT PREDICT
THENSUTCOME OF HIS EFFORTS.

3. TALKING OF FUTURE AAFLI/HMS RELATIONS, HE SAID HIS
THINKING HAD BEEN OF A THREE-CORNERED RELATIONSHIP
WHICH WOULD ALSO INCLUDE INTUC. I REPLIED THAT WHILE
WE HAVE WARM FRATERNAL RELATIONS WITH INTUC, WE NOW HAVE
NO JOINT PROJECTS WITH IT AND THAT AT PRESENT IT APPEARS
THAT OUR PROGRAMS WILL BE CONCENTRATED IN BOMBAY AND
SOUTHERN INDIA.

4. AFTER INFORMING HIM IN DETAIL OF MY ACTIVITIES DURING
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RECENT MONTHS, INCLUDING MY VISIT TO COONOOR AND RECENT

CONTACT WITH THE PORT AND DOCK WORKERS ABOUT THEIR HOUSING PROJECT IN BOMBAY, I AGAIN RAISED THE QUESTION OF AN AAFLI/HMS WORKING RELATIONSHIP. MAHESH THEN SHOWED ME HUNTER WHARTON'S LETTER OF JANUARY 13 AND HIS REPLY. MY INITIAL BUT SILENT REACTION TO HIS REPLY WAS AMAZEMENT OVER ITS SEEMINGLY NEGATIVE CHARACTER. I SAY, HOWEVER, THAT, ALTHOUGH IT CONCENTRATED ON COMPLAINT AGAINST OUR DEALING DIRECTLY WITH PERUMAL, IT COULD BE CONSTRUED AS AN INDIRECT INVITATION TO ELIMINATE THE GROUNDS FOR THE COMPLAINT THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A DIRECT WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE THROUGH HMS. IN COMMENTING THEN ON THE LETTER TO MAHESH, I MADE NO REFERENCE WHATSOEVER TO THE COMPLAINT, BUT ASKED IF I HAD CORRECTLY UNDERSTOOD THE LETTER AS SUCH AN INVITATION. MAHESH SAID THIS WAS CORRECT THAT IT WAS WITH THIS IN MIND THAT HE HAD SENT A COPY OF THE LETTER TO PRESIDENT MEANY. FORTUNATELY, HE CONTINUED, IT HAD BEEN MADE EASY FOR HIM TO DO THIS SINCE WHARTON'S LETTER BORE A NOTATION THAT A COPY OF WHARTON'S LETTER HAD BEEN FURNISHED PRESIDENT MEANY. I AGREED AND SAID THAT IT SEEMED TO ME THAT THE WAY HAD BEEN PAVED FOR A RESPONSE PROPOSING THE REGULARIZATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE AFL-CIO AND HMS THROUGH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN OFFICIAL RELATIONSHIP THROUGH AAFLI.

5. MAHESH THEN SAID THE WISHES TO OBTAIN OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE FOR HMS-AFFILIATES AND TO COORDINATE THIS ASSISTANCE IN HMS. HE MENTIONED CATEGORIES OF ASSISTANCE SUCH AS SOCIAL PROJECTS AND EDUCATION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SUB-COMMITTEES WITHIN HMS TO MONITOR ACTIVITIES WITHIN THESE CATEGORIES. (I HAVE SINCE LEARNED FROM PERUMAL BY LETTER THAT HMS HAS ALREADY SET UP A SUB-COMMITTEE TO SUPERVISE HIS PARTICIPATION IN AN EDUCATION PROGRAM OF THE ILO TO BE CONDUCTED THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THIS IS ANOTHER PART OF THE ILO PROGRAM WHICH CAME TO MY ATTENTION AND THAT OF JACK MUTH WHEN WE TALKED WITH RAM LAL THAKAR AND H.D. MUKERJI OF INTUC IN EARLY SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR.) I COMMENTED THAT THIS SEEMED TO ME TO BE A LOGICAL WAY TO PROCEED. UNDER SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT HMS COULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACT AS A CLEARING HOUSE AND, SINCE IT IS A DEMOCRATIC ORGANIZATION, IT MEMBER UNIONS WOULD THEMSELVES WORK OUT WITHIN HMS ASSISTANCE PRIORITIES.

6. I TOLD HIM THAT I HAD NOT FORGOTTEN THE REQUEST HE HAD MADE OF ME IN SEPTEMBER OF LAST YEAR FOR A LETTER FROM PRESIDENT MEANY TO HIM STATING THAT AAFLI WAS THE ARM OF THE AFL-CIO IN ASIA, THAT I HAD CONVEYED HIS

REQUEST TO WASHINGTON BUT THAT I SURMISED IT COULD NOT
BE PRESENTED TO PRESIDENT MEANY BECAUSE HE KNEW THAT MANY
HMS OFFICIALS HAD PERSONAL AND CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE THAT
THIS RELATIONSHIP EXISTED. MAHESH ACKNOWLEDGED THE
LOGIC OF THIS POSITION. WE THEN AGREED THAT HIS REPLY
TO WHARTON WITH A COPY TO PRESIDENT MEANY MIGHT SERVE
TO SURMOUNT THIS DIFFICULTY.

7. COMMENT: MAHESH WAS WARM AND FRIENDLY THROUGHOUT
THIS MEETING. THIS WAS IN MARKED CONTRAST TO HIS
ATTITUDE ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS WHEN I MET WITH HIM.
HE ASKED THAT I CONVEY HIS WARM REGARDS TO YOU AND OTHER
FRIENDS IN AAFLI AND IN THE AFL-CIO.

8. IN THE FACE OF IT HCY REPLY TO WHARTON IS A BIT OF
A SHOCKER. IN MY OPINION, ITS NEGATIVE TONE IS A
REFLECTION OF ONE PART OF MAHESH DESAI'S PERSONALITY
AND IS AN EXPRESSION OF A RESENTMENT HE FELT COMPELLED
TO EXPRESS BECAUSE OF HIS FEELING THAT HE HAD BEEN
BY-PASSED BY AAFLI IN ITS DEALINGS WITH PERUMAL. I
BELIEVE HIS LETTER CAN SERVE AS A BASIS FOR THE
ESTABLISHMENT OF THE OFFICIAL WORKING RELATIONSHIP
WITH HMS WHICH WE DESIRE, IF OUR RESPONSE TO HIS LETTER
IGNORES ITS BARKING AND CONCENTRATES ON THE POSITIVE
ELEMENT WHICH, ACCORDING TO WHAT HE TOLD ME AND WHAT I
HAVE REPORTED ABOVE, HE REALLY HAD IN MIND. SINCE I AM
TO ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON NEXT WEEK, I WOULD BE HAPPY TO
PARTICIPATE IN DRAFTING A REPLY TO HIS LETTER, IF YOU
WISH ME TO DO SO.

9. MANIBEN KARA TOLD ME SHE HAS BEEN WORKING ON MAHESH
IN OUR BEHALF FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS. I BELIEVE
HIS MORE POSITIVE ATTITUDE TOWARD US TO BE PRINCIPALLY
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THE RESULT OF HER AND PERUMAL'S EFFORTS. WEAST
END QUOTE.
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